

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article for absorbing body fluids which comprises a
3 matrix containing metallic silver, characterized in that
4 the silver is ~~present-bound~~ chemically or physically
5 attached to a fiber ~~(24)~~ exclusively ~~on~~ to the surface
6 thereof such that it cannot be flushed away from the
7 fiber in use of the sanitary article.

1 2. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to claim 1, characterized in that the
3 metallic silver is attached in depressions in the
4 surface, ~~especially hind-grippedly.~~

1 3. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that
3 the fiber ~~(24)~~ is a synthetic fiber, especially a
4 synthetic fiber containing a polyamide, a polyester, a
5 polyacrylic, an elastane or a polychloride.

1 4. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the fiber ~~(24)~~ is present in the form of a woven
4 ~~(18)~~, in the form of a nonwoven or in the form of a
5 thread.

1 5. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the fiber ~~(24)~~ has a silver content of not more
4 than 3%.

1 6. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the silver content of the fiber ~~(24)~~ is just high
4 enough to ensure that an antimicrobial effect is
5 detectable on a first body contact surface ~~(12)~~ of the
6 sanitary article for not more than 24 hours in
7 particular.

1 7. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the metallic silver is present in the form of
4 bound particles from 1 to 30 nm, preferably from 1 to 10
5 nm and especially from 1 to 6 nm in diameter.

1 8. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the metallic silver fully surrounds the outer
4 surface of the fiber ~~(24)~~.

1 9. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the metallic silver fully surrounds the outer
4 surface of the fiber ~~(24)~~.

1 10. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the fiber ~~(24)~~, the woven ~~(18)~~, the nonwoven or
4 the thread is disposed within a layer of the sanitary
5 article.

1 11. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to claim 10, characterized in that the
3 layer is disposed closer to the first surface ~~(12)~~ of the
4 sanitary article than to a second surface ~~(14)~~ which is
5 not intended for body contact, especially closer to the
6 first surface ~~(12)~~ than to the midpoint between the first
7 surface ~~(12)~~ and the second surface ~~(14)~~.

1 12. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the sanitary article contains a pulp ~~(20)~~ and/or
4 a superabsorbent ~~(22)~~.

1 13. (currently amended) An absorbent sanitary
2 article according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized
3 in that the sanitary article is constructed as a
4 disposable article.

1 14. (currently amended) An absorbent article
2 according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, characterized in that
3 the sanitary article is constructed as a diaper,
4 especially a pants-type diaper, a training pant, an
5 incontinence pad or a feminine hygiene article,
6 especially a sanitary napkin ~~(10)~~, a panty liner or a
7 tampon ~~(26)~~.

1 15. (currently amended) A process for producing an
2 absorbent sanitary article for absorbing body fluids
3 which comprises a matrix containing metallic silver,
4 which comprises the silver being bound to a fiber ~~(24)~~
5 exclusively on the surface thereof.

1 16. (currently amended) A process according to
2 claim 15, wherein the silver is applied to the fiber ~~(24)~~
3 by electro, chemical or electrochemical deposition or by
4 vapor deposition.

1 17. (currently amended) A process according to
2 claim 15 ~~or 16~~, wherein the silver is bound to the fiber
3 ~~(24)~~ by means of a chemical or physical bond.

1 18. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 17~~ claim 15, wherein the metallic silver
3 is attached in depressions in the surface, ~~especially~~
4 ~~hind-grippedly~~.

1 19. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 18~~ claim 15, wherein the surface of the
3 fiber (24) is mordanted prior to the binding of the
4 silver.

1 20. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 19~~ claim 15, wherein the fiber (24) is a
3 synthetic fiber, especially a synthetic fiber containing
4 a polyamide, a polyester, a polyacrylic, an elastane or a
5 polychloride.

1 21. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 20~~ claim 15, wherein the fiber (24) is
3 incorporated in the sanitary article in the form of a
4 woven (18), in the form of a nonwoven or in the form of a
5 thread.

1 22. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 21~~ claim 15, wherein the silver is
3 applied up to a 3% silver content of the fiber ~~(24)~~.

1 23. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 22~~ claim 15, wherein the silver is only
3 applied up to a silver content of the fiber ~~(24)~~ just
4 high enough to ensure that an antimicrobial effect is
5 detectable on a first body contact surface ~~(12)~~ of the
6 sanitary article for not more than 24 hours in
7 particular.

1 24. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 23~~ claim 15, wherein the metallic silver
3 is bound in the form of particles from 1 to 30 nm,
4 preferably from 1 to 10 nm and especially from 1 to 6 nm
5 in diameter.

1 25. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 24~~ claim 15, wherein the metallic silver
3 is applied such that the outer surface of the fiber ~~(24)~~
4 is fully surrounded by silver.

1 26. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 25~~ claim 15, wherein the fiber ~~(24)~~, the
3 woven ~~(18)~~, the nonwoven or the thread is disbursed
4 within the sanitary article in piecewise form.

1 27. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 26~~ claim 15, wherein the fiber ~~(24)~~, the
3 woven ~~(18)~~, the nonwoven or the thread is disposed within
4 a layer of the sanitary article.

1 28. (currently amended) A process according to
2 claim 27, wherein the layer is disposed closer to the
3 first surface ~~(12)~~ of the sanitary article than to a
4 second surface ~~(14)~~ which is not intended for body
5 contact, especially closer to the first surface ~~(12)~~ than
6 to the midpoint between the first surface ~~(12)~~ and the
7 second surface ~~(14)~~.

1 29. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any~~
2 ~~of claims 15 to 28~~ claim 15, wherein a pulp ~~(20)~~ and/or a
3 superabsorbent ~~(22)~~ is incorporated in the sanitary
4 article.